

General Resources

Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ): AHRQ is the lead federal agency responsible for research on how the health care system is working including research on quality, cost, access, use of services, and health care outcomes and patient safety. AHRQ has a variety of resources for consumers, including consumer guides for improved health and health care.

Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE): The MHBE's goal is to make health insurance affordable and accessible for all Maryland residents.

Medicare's **Care Compare** allows you to search and compare nursing homes, hospitals, and other providers near you.

National Committee for Quality Assurance works to improve the quality of health care.

National Quality Forum (NQF): The NQF is a resource for healthcare quality measurement and improvement. NQF-endorsed measures are considered the gold **standard for healthcare measurement**.

Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ): The OHCQ is a state agency that monitors the quality of care in Maryland's approximately 14,000 health care and community residential programs. The OHCQ also licenses and certifies health care facilities.

Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA): The MIA is an independent State agency that regulates Maryland's insurance industry and protects consumers by ensuring that insurance companies and health plans act in accordance with insurance laws.

The Office of the Attorney General of Maryland has "**A Consumer Guide for Marylanders**," a 36-page booklet with information on avoiding scams and fraud. This publication includes common health issues including help with medical insurance problems.

Aging Resources

Maryland Access Point allows you to contact your local Area Agency on Aging for help with planning for long term care, finding community services, and navigating the health care system.

MD THINK is a human services network that allows services to share data between agencies, including the Department of Human Services, the Department of Juvenile Services, the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, and the Department of Health.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Nursing Home Resource Center allows you to find nursing home resources.

[Your Guide to Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage](#) is a 76-page booklet that explains how Medicare Part D works, shows examples of how the coverage gap is applied, and provides resources for how to get help paying for prescription drugs if you have limited income.

[Prescription Drug Information for Seniors](#) provides information on selecting Medicare Part D plans.

[HealthCare.gov](#) - a federal web site that will explain features of the Affordable Care Act. There are sections on the site explaining services and benefits for people with **[disabilities](#)** and for **[seniors](#)**.

[Mid-Atlantic Aging Life Care Association](#) An Aging Life Care specialist is a trained professional specializing in assisting older people and their families with long-term care arrangements. Private aging life care specialists remain independent of the resources they recommend in order to provide an unbiased assessment of the situation.

Hospitals

[Leapfrog Group](#): The Leapfrog Group collects and reports data to help patients and purchasers choose the right hospital for their medical needs. You can see how hospitals perform on patient safety.

[Maryland Health Services Cost Review Commission \(HSCRC\)](#): The HSCRC is the state agency responsible for reviewing and approving hospital rates and making financial information about Maryland hospitals available to the public.

[Maryland Hospital Association \(MHA\)](#): The MHA is a hospital advocacy, resource and quality improvement organization.

Outpatient Surgery Centers

[Maryland Ambulatory Surgery Association \(MASA\)](#): The MASA is the state's ambulatory surgery association working to shape the future of ambulatory surgery center by testifying to the legislatures, providing educational seminars and conferences, maintaining a statewide databased on compliance and regulatory issues, and educating the public.

[Ambulatory Surgery Center Association \(ASCA\)](#): The ASCA assists ambulatory surgery centers in delivering safe, high quality, cost-effective patient care.

[American Society of Anesthesiologists \(ASA\)](#): The ASA is professional group of physicians organized to raise and maintain the standards of the medical practice of anesthesiology and improve the care of the patient.

[American College of Surgeons \(ACS\)](#): The ACS is an organization for surgeons with a mission of improving the quality of care for the surgical patient by setting high standards for surgical education and practice.